United Nations S/PRST/2001/8

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2001

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4298th meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 March 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1208 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999) — Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2001/218)", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of its resolution 1244 (1999) of 10 June 1999.

"The Security Council commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the commander of the international security presence (KFOR) for their ongoing efforts to implement fully resolution 1244 (1999), undertaken under difficult circumstances, and welcomes the priority areas of work identified by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

"The Security Council welcomes the establishment of a working group under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General aimed at developing a legal framework for provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government in Kosovo and stresses the need for all ethnic groups to be represented in the work of this group. It underlines the need to keep the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia informed on the process. It calls on all parties to support the efforts of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to build a stable multi-ethnic democratic society in Kosovo and to ensure suitable conditions for Kosovo-wide elections. It stresses the importance of a number of steps being taken for the holding of these elections: the establishment of the legal framework, in particular the definition of the functions and powers of the elected bodies; the development of an integrated voter registry which should include the refugees and internally displaced persons; full involvement of all the communities in the ballot; and a high security environment for the voting.

"The Security Council welcomes close contact between the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and UNMIK and KFOR, in particular the steps taken towards the opening of an UNMIK office in Belgrade, which will facilitate these consultations. It stresses the importance of substantial dialogue between Kosovo political leaders and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

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"The Security Council calls for an end to all acts of violence in Kosovo, in particular those which are ethnically motivated and urges all political leaders in Kosovo to condemn these acts and to increase their efforts to create inter-ethnic tolerance. It reiterates the importance of resolving the problem of the missing and detainees and notes that this would be a major confidence-building measure. It welcomes the initial steps taken by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in this regard.

"The Security Council remains concerned about the security situation in certain municipalities in Southern Serbia as a result of the violent actions of ethnic Albanian armed groups. It welcomes the ceasefire agreements signed on 12 March 2001 and calls for strict compliance with their provisions. It stresses that a peaceful settlement of this crisis can only be achieved through substantial dialogue. It commends the continued restraint of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia. The Security Council welcomes the plan of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for Southern Serbia and supports its initiative to find a peaceful and durable solution through a process of dialogue and confidence-building measures. It expresses the opinion that the swift implementation of confidence-building measures would be an important element in a peaceful settlement, and underlines the importance of continued political and financial support for this process by the international community.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision taken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to authorize the commander of KFOR to allow the controlled return of forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the Ground Safety Zone as defined in the military-technical agreement signed in Kumanovo on 9 June 1999 referred to in Annex II of resolution 1244 (1999) as a first step in a phased and conditioned reduction of the Ground Safety Zone.

"The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as set out in the statement of its President of 7 March 2001 (S/PRST/2001/7). It strongly condemns the continuing extremist violence in parts of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, supported from outside the country, which constitutes a threat to the stability and security of the entire region, and underlines the importance of maintaining the territorial integrity of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and all other States in the region. It supports efforts by the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to cooperate with NATO and other international organizations to end this violence in a manner consistent with the rule of law.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."